United Nations E/CN.6/2000/NGO/4

Economic and Social Council

Distr.: General
14 January 2000

Original: English

Commission on the Status of Women

Forty-fourth session
28 February-2 March 2000
Item 3 of the provisional agenda*
Follow-up to the Fourth World Conference on Women

Statement submitted by Soroptimist International and Zonta International, non-governmental organizations in general consultative status with the Economic and Social Council; Associated Country Women of the World, Bahá'í International Community, the International Federation for Home Economics, the International Federation of University Women, the Pan-Pacific and South-East Asia Women's Association, the United States Committee for the United Nations Fund for Women, the World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts, and the World Federation for Mental Health, non-governmental organizations in special consultative status with the Council; and the Armenian Relief Society, a non-governmental organization on the Roster of the Council.

The Secretary-General has received the following statement, which is being circulated in accordance with paragraphs 30 and 31 of Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31 of 26 July 1996.

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We, the international and national non-governmental organizations in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council and members of the NGO Committee on UNIFEM, strongly endorse UNIFEM's efforts "to turn resolutions into realities". Taking as its blueprint the Beijing Platform for Action, UNIFEM continues to support the planning and implementation of strategies to develop and operationalize national gender action plans and programmes and to strengthen the capacity to monitor progress in achieving the goals and strategic objectives of the Platform for Action.

In partnership with Governments and civil society, UNIFEM has focused particular attention on:

- Strengthening women's economic capacity;
- Engendering governance and leadership;
- Promoting human rights and the elimination of all forms of violence against women.

The UNIFEM programme of work in over 100 countries has relied on three key strategies:

- Building synergetic partnerships through a multidisciplinary, multisectoral and multifaceted approach;
- Increasing capacity to undertake women's empowerment and gender mainstreaming initiatives, a critical element being access to gender expertise;
- Improving and increasing the knowledge base on women's empowerment and gender mainstreaming by synthesizing, disseminating

* E/CN.6/2000/1.

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and improving access to technical information so that partners can learn from each others' successes and failures.

In order to strengthen UNIFEM's efforts to give life to General Assembly resolutions in their programmes and initiatives, we strongly urge Member States to:

- Increase their financial support of the UNIFEM Trust Fund in Support of Actions to Eliminate Violence against Women;
- Protect UNIFEM programmes that increase the economic capacity of women by ensuring that globalization and trade policies become pro-poor, pro-sustainability and pro-equality;
- Strengthen mechanisms for tracking progress on gender equality through the gathering of current and reliable statistics and data on women and girls;
- Promote UNIFEM efforts in situations of armed conflict to involve women in peace-building activities;
- Assist UNIFEM in promoting the implementation of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and its Optional Protocol;
- Support the integration of women's interests and concerns into the basic documents and procedures for the formation of the International Criminal Court;
- Utilize new communication channels and technologies to bring the grounded realities of women into direct contact with policy-making and intergovernmental processes.

We wholeheartedly endorse the important work of UNIFEM in making Governments and civil society accountable to the world's women.